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INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1954
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2294
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1564
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1480
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 4384
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 1360
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 4693
RUEHBA/AMCONSUL PERTH 0561
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: INDONESIA PLANS ITS OWN INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRACY
FORUM

REF: A. 07 STATE 169367

[1](#)B. 07 JAKARTA 3006

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4 (b+d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: A Department of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU) contact briefed DepPol/C on GOI plans to host the first meeting of what it calls the "Bali Democracy Forum" this year. The details are a bit vague, although the meeting will be at the ministerial level and many countries--democratic and otherwise (such as Burma)--will be invited. The contact said the ultimate goal was to bring lagging governments up to speed with democratic trends. The GOI is not clear how its plan might fit into existing international architecture. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) "DEMOCRACY FORUM" THIS YEAR: The GOI is beginning to float its own democracy initiative. Umar Hadi, Director for Public Diplomacy at DEPLU, met January 31 with DepPol/C and briefed him on Indonesia's plans to convene the first meeting of what it calls the "Bali Democracy Forum." Hadi, who is known to be close to Foreign Minister Wirajuda, said the Indonesian government hoped to hold the ministerial this year--sometime between May and October--depending on President Yudhoyono's schedule.

[1](#)3. (C) Hadi said he has already sounded out diplomats from Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Qatar and Tunisia, netting positive feedback. New Zealand DCM David Strachan confirmed to us February 1 that Hadi had asked him informally if New Zealand would like to participate in the first meeting. Strachan is checking with Wellington.

[1](#)4. (C) DepPol/C asked whether the U.S. would be invited to participate. Hadi replied that the Forum would be open to all nations. That said, those which will be part of a core "host sponsoring countries" group are still being considered. The GOI wants to achieve a delicate balance of democracies and non-democracies, and a North-South mix. The Davos Economic Forum inspired Wirajuda to first propose this concept way back in 2002, Hadi commented. (Note: GOI officials were calling this "Bali Democracy Forum" idea the "Asian Democracy Forum" in the past--see ref B.)

15. (C) IT'S ALL A BIT VAGUE: Hadi was a bit vague on details and objectives. Ministers at the first meeting will decide on what democracy issues need to be addressed. Based on these discussions, technical meetings will be held as often as need be throughout the year, Hadi remarked. Ministers might not reconvene for a couple of years. Experts from throughout the world will be invited to contribute. For example, an emerging democracy could ask the Forum for help on how to conduct its elections.

16. (C) Hadi emphasized that the Forum was not in response to the Asia Pacific Democracy Partnership (APDP), a USG initiative (ref A). (Note: Re the APDP, Hadi had no further information as to whether or not Indonesia intended to accept the USG offer to participate.) He said the idea as first conceived was to bring lagging regimes such as Burma up to speed so that they do not drag down ASEAN democracies such as Indonesia and the Philippines. The Forum is actually a way to co-opt neighbors such as Burma in an unthreatening setting, he said, making clear that the Burmese regime would be invited to participate in the Forum. Hadi was also not clear how the GOI plan might fit into existing international architecture, such as the Community of Democracies. DepPol/C asked Hadi to keep the USG informed of its efforts and its plan to host the Forum this year.

HUME